

## Rule 31. Four-Ball Stroke Play As Amended for SWGA

### Definitions

All defined terms are in *italics* and are listed alphabetically in the Definitions section (at the end of this document)

#### 31-1. General

In *four-ball* stroke play two *competitors* play as *partners*, each playing his own ball. The lower score of the *partners* is the score for the hole. If one *partner* fails to complete the play of a hole, there is no penalty

The Rules of Golf, so far as they are not at variance with the following specific Rules, apply to *four-ball* stroke play. (USGA)

In *four-ball* stroke play two *competitors* play as *partners*, each playing his own ball. The combined score of the *partners* is the score for the hole. If one partner fails to complete the play of a hole, the team has conceded the hole. The exception to this rule is danger caused by lightning, see Regulation 9-Hole League Rule 18. Scoring of the hole for GHIN purposes would be the number of strokes played so far or equitable strokes for the hole, whichever is greater. (SWGA)

(See league rules regarding picking up ball with excessive strokes, note that the equitable score is the max posted for GHIN) The Rules of Golf, so far as they are not at variance with the following specific Rules, apply to *four-ball* stroke play.

#### 31-2. Representation of Side

A *side* may be represented by either *partner* for all or any part of a *stipulated round*; both *partners* need not be present. An absent *competitor* may join his *partner* between holes, but not during play of a hole. (USGA) (SWGA)

#### 31-3. Maximum of 14 Clubs

The *side* is penalized for a breach of Rules 4-3a (iii) and 4-4 by either *partner*. (USGA)

The *player* is penalized for a breach of Rules 4-3a (iii) and 4-4 by either *partner* (SWGA)

#### 31-4. Scoring

The *marker* is required to record for each hole only the gross score of whichever *partner's* score is to count. The gross scores to count must be individually identifiable; otherwise the *side* is **disqualified**. Only one of the *partners* need be responsible for complying with Rule 6-6b. **(6-6b. Signing and Returning Score Card**

After completion of the round, the *competitor* should check his score for each hole and settle any doubtful points with the *Committee*. He must ensure that the *marker* or *markers* have signed the score card, sign the score card himself and return it to the *Committee* as soon as possible. )

(Wrong score — see Rule 31-7a.) (USGA)

The *marker* is required to record for each hole the gross score of every competitor in the match. The combined competitors net (handicap adjusted) score for a team is used on each hole to determine the award of the hole. Only one of the *partners* need be responsible for complying with Rule 6-6b. **(6-6b. Signing and Returning Score Card** After completion of the round, the *competitors* should check their scores for each hole and settle any doubtful points with the *other competitors*. Ensure that the *markers* have signed and dated both score cards, then return to the league director as soon as possible.) (SWGA)

(Wrong score — see Rule 31-7a.) (SWGA)

### 31-5. Order of Play

Balls belonging to the same *side* may be played in the order the *side* considers best. (USGA)

Ready Golf is encouraged. The first player ready to play should go ahead and do so when it is safe for all players in the match. (SWGA)

### 31-6. Wrong Ball

If a *competitor* makes a *stroke* at a *wrong ball* that is not in a *hazard*, he incurs a penalty of two strokes and must correct his mistake by playing the correct ball or by proceeding under the *Rules*. His *partner* incurs no penalty even if the *wrong ball* belongs to him. If the *wrong ball* belongs to another *competitor*, its owner must place a ball on the spot from which the *wrong ball* was first played. (USGA) (SWGA)

### 31-7. Disqualification Penalties

#### a. Breach by One Partner

A *side* is disqualified from the competition for a breach of any of the following by either *partner*: (USGA) (SWGA)

- Rule 1-3 — Agreement to Waive *Rules*
- Rule 3-4 — Refusal to Comply with a *Rule*
- Rule 4-1 or -2 — Clubs
- Rule 5-1 or -2 — The Ball
- Rule 6-2b — Handicap (playing off higher handicap; failure to record handicap)
- Rule 6-4 — *Caddie* (having more than one caddie; failure to correct breach immediately)
- Rule 6-6b — Signing and Returning Score Card
- Rule 6-6d — Wrong Score for Hole, *i.e.*, when the recorded score of the *partner* whose score is to count is lower than actually taken. If the recorded score of the *partner* whose score is to count is higher than actually taken, it must stand as returned.
- Rule 6-7 — Undue Delay; Slow Play (repeated offense)
- Rule 7-1 — Practice Before or Between Rounds
- Rule 14-3 — Artificial Devices and Unusual *Equipment*
- Rule 31-4 — Gross Scores to Count Not Individually Identifiable

■ **b. Breach by Both Partners**

*A side is disqualified:*

- (i) for a breach by both of Rule 6-3 (Time of Starting and Groups) or Rule 6-8 (Discontinuance of Play), or
- (ii) if, at the same hole, each *partner* is in breach of a *Rule* the penalty for which is disqualification from the competition or for a hole.

■ **c. For the Hole Only**

In all other cases where a breach of a *Rule* would result in disqualification, *the competitor is disqualified only for the hole at which the breach occurred.*

### 31-8. Effect of Other Penalties

If a *competitor's* breach of a *Rule* assists his *partner's* play, *the partner incurs the applicable penalty in addition to any penalty incurred by the competitor.*

In all other cases where a *competitor* incurs a penalty for breach of a *Rule*, the penalty does not apply to his *partner*.

## Definitions

**Four-Ball:** A match in which two play their better ball against the better ball of two other players. (USGA)

**Four-Ball:** A match in which two play against two other players. (SWGGA)

### Competitor

A “*competitor*” is a player in a stroke play competition. A “*fellow-competitor*” is any person with whom the *competitor* plays. Neither is *partner* of the other.

In stroke play *foursome* and *four-ball* competitions, where the context so admits, the word “*competitor*” or “*fellow-competitor*” includes his *partner*. (USGA)

A “*competitor*” is a player in a stroke play competition. A “*fellow-competitor*” is any person with whom the *competitor* plays.

In stroke play *foursome* and *four-ball* competitions, where the context so admits, the word “*competitor*” or “*fellow-competitor*” includes his *partner*. (SWGGA)

### Partner

A “*partner*” is a player associated with another player on the same *side*.

In a *threesome*, *foursome*, *best-ball* or *four-ball* match, where the context so admits, the word “*player*” includes his *partner* or *partners*. (USGA) (SWGGA)

### Side

A “*side*” is a player, or two or more players who are *partners*. (USGA)

A “*side*” is a player, or two players who are *partners*. A *side* may be represented by either *partner* for all or any part of a *stipulated round*; both *partners* need not be present. (SWGGA)

### Stipulated Round

The “*stipulated round*” consists of playing the holes of the *course* in their correct sequence unless otherwise authorized by the *Committee*. The number of holes in a *stipulated round* is 18 unless a smaller number is authorized by the *Committee*.

As to extension of *stipulated round* in match play, see Rule 2-3.

(2-3 excerpt If there is a tie, the *Committee* may extend the *stipulated round* by as many holes as are required for a match to be won.) (USGA)

The “*stipulated round*” consists of playing the holes of the *course* in their correct sequence unless otherwise authorized by the *Committee*( See rules on makeup of rained out match). The number of holes in a *stipulated round* is 9. Tied matches are scored at half a point so no extension of the *stipulated round* will be necessary. (SWGGA)

## **Marker**

A “*marker*” is one who is appointed by the *Committee* to record a *competitor’s* score in stroke play. He may be a *fellow-competitor*. He is not a *referee*. (USGA)

A “*marker*” is one who is designated by each team to record all *competitor’s* scores in stroke play. Subsequently two scorecards are kept recording the scores of all players in the match. (SWGGA)

## **Committee**

The “*Committee*” is the *Committee* in charge of the competition or, if the matter does not arise in a competition, the *Committee* in charge of the *course*. (USGA)

The “*Committee*” is the *League Director* in charge of the league or, if the matter needs further resolution, the *SWGGA Board of Directors*. (SWGGA)

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